

Best Management Practices

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION



Redfin Darter

Etheostoma whipplei

Common name • Redfin Darter

Scientific name • *Etheostoma whipplei*

State status • Endangered

Ecology

Redfin darters inhabit streams in parts of southeastern Kansas, southwestern Missouri, northern Arkansas and along the northern edge of the Gulf Coast. In Missouri, they prefer gravel and shale riffles in small- to medium-sized prairie and Ozark border rivers. Very little is known about the life history of the redfin darter, but they likely forage on aquatic insects and spawn in April. Adults typically reach a length of 1.8-2.5 inches.

Reasons for Decline

Although there is no indication that redfin darters were ever more abundant in Missouri than they are currently, they are part of a distinctive and important fish fauna that is rare throughout their historical range. Activities such as construction of dams and impoundments, unrestricted sand and gravel removal and habitat degradation due to agricultural runoff containing pesticide chemicals and waste from livestock may damage current and potential habitat.

Specific Recommendations

Even though historical records do not suggest that the abundance and distribution of the redfin darter in Missouri have been altered, it is important that current and potential habitat be protected. To do this, project activities in the redfin darter range should minimize impact to streams and riparian corridors.

- Project activities should not occur between March 15 and June 15 below the high water level of streams within the range of the redfin darter.
- Removal of gravel should take place at least 20 feet from the water line only on unconsolidated gravel bars.
- Creation of impoundments should be avoided in redfin darter habitat.
- For culvert installation, the top elevation of the floor should be approximately the same as the existing streambed to avoid upstream headcutting and to provide fish passage at low flows.
- Erosion and sediment controls should be implemented, maintained and monitored for the duration of the project.

General Recommendations

Refer to Management Recommendations for Construction Projects Affecting Missouri Streams and Rivers.

Information Contacts

For further information regarding regulations for development in rivers and streams, contact:

Missouri Department of Conservation
Policy Coordination Section
P.O. Box 180
2901 W. Truman Blvd
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180
Telephone: 573/751-4115

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Division of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176
Telephone: 573/526-3315

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Branch
700 Federal Building
Kansas City, MO 64106-2896
Telephone: 816/983-3990

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Water, Wetlands, and Pesticides Division
901 North 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101
Telephone: 913/551-7307

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
608 E. Cherry Street, Room 200
Columbia, MO 65201
Telephone: 573/876-1911

Disclaimer

These Best Management Practices were prepared by the Missouri Department of Conservation with assistance from other state agencies, contractors, and others to provide guidance to those people who wish to voluntarily act to protect wildlife and habitat. Compliance with Best Management Practices is not required by the Missouri wildlife and forestry law nor by any regulation of the Missouri Conservation Commission. Other federal, state or local laws may affect construction practices.